

REMARKS

Applicants are filing a Request for Continued Examination in response to the final Office Action of October 9, 2007. Applicants ask that all claims be allowed in view of the amendment to the claims and the following remarks. Claims 1-4, 6-14, 19-33, and 35-39 are pending, of which claims 1, 29, and 30 are independent.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 6-12, 21-33, and 35-39

Claims 1-4, 6-12, 21-33, and 35-39 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,247,043 (Bates) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,835,089 (Skarbo). Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 29, and 30 and request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4, 6-12, 21-33, and 35-39 because none of Bates, Skarbo, or any proper combination of Bates and Skarbo describes or suggests all of the features recited in amended independent claims 1, 29, and 30, as described more fully below.

As amended, independent claim 1 recites a method that includes, among other features, representing a group of contacts with a specific identifier that may be selected by the member to enable communications to be sent by the member to the group of contacts using multiple different communication modalities, and enabling a member to use any one of the multiple different communication modalities to send a communication to the group of contacts by selecting any one of the multiple different communication modalities to be leveraged in sending the communication and specifying that the communication be sent to the specific identifier by which the group of contacts is represented. In addition, the method also includes receiving an indication that the member has specified that a particular communication be sent to the specific identifier by which the group of contacts is represented, and, in response, determining, from among the multiple different communication modalities, the particular communication modality that the member has selected to be leveraged in sending the particular communication to the group of contacts and determining, for individual contacts within the group of contacts,

appropriate identifiers to use to address communications to be sent to the individual contacts using the particular communication modality selected by the member.

The Office Action acknowledges that Bates fails to describe or suggest multiple applications. See final Office Action of October 9, 2007 at page 3, line 6. Therefore, the Office Action relies on Skarbo for teaching multiple different applications. See final Office Action of October 9, 2007 at page 3, line 7-8. Because, as the Office Action acknowledges, Bates fails to describe or suggest multiple applications, Bates also fails to describe or suggest multiple different communication modalities and, in turn, representing a group of contacts with a specific identifier that may be selected by the member to enable communications to be sent by the member to the group of contacts using multiple different communication modalities, and, in response to receiving an indication that the member has specified that a particular communication be sent to the specific identifier by which the group of contacts is represented, determining, from among the multiple different communication modalities, the particular communication modality that the member has selected to be leveraged in sending the particular communication to the group of contacts and determining, for individual contacts within the group of contacts, appropriate identifiers to use to address communications to be sent to the individual contacts using the particular communication modality selected by the member, as recited in independent claim 1. Skarbo also fails to describe or suggest these features of independent claim 1.

Skarbo describes a shared electronic address book for multiple communication applications that, according to Skarbo, was developed in response to perceived problems with previously-existing single application, electronic address book applications which required users to maintain a separate address book for each communication application that he/she used (e.g., separate e-mail application, telephone application, and fax application address books). See, e.g., Skarbo at col. 2, lines 3-31 and 40-42. Figure 4 of Skarbo, which is reproduced below for reference, illustrates a user interface provided by Skarbo's shared address book for multiple applications and is illustrative of Skarbo's shared address book for multiple communication applications:

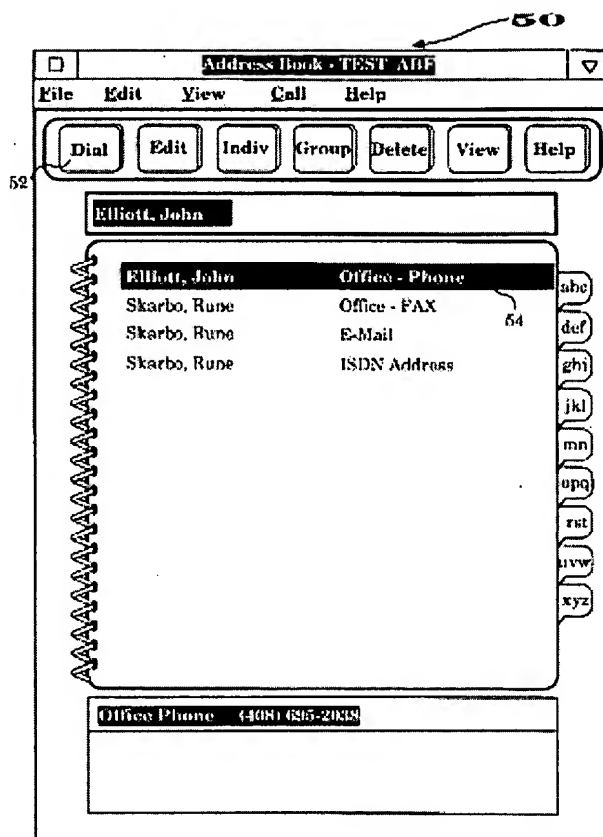


Figure 4

Reproduction of Skarbo's Figure 4.

As reflected in Skarbo's Figure 4, Skarbo's shared address book for multiple communication applications stores multiple different addresses corresponding to multiple different communication applications for a single individual as separate address book entries. For example, as illustrated in Skarbo's Figure 4, the user of Skarbo's shared address book has stored an office fax number, an e-mail address, and an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) address for Rune Skarbo as separate address book entries.

As described by Skarbo, Skarbo's shared address book enables a user to send a message to a potential message recipient using a particular communication application by selecting, from among the multiple different addresses of the potential message recipient stored in the shared address book, the address for the potential message recipient that corresponds to the particular

communication application. See, e.g., Skarbo at col. 8, lines 47-65. For example, when the user of Skarbo's shared address book desires to send a fax to Rune Skarbo's office fax number, the user selects the office fax number for Rune Skarbo from among the various different addresses for Rune Skarbo that are stored in Skarbo's shared address book. See, e.g., Skarbo at col. 8, lines 47-65. In response, the shared address book notifies the user's fax application that the user is attempting to send a fax to Rune Skarbo's office fax number, and the fax application enables the user to send a fax to Rune Skarbo's office fax number. See, e.g., Skarbo at col. 8, lines 47-65.

Importantly, as discussed above, Skarbo's shared address book stores multiple different addresses for a single individual corresponding to multiple different communications applications for the single individual as separate address book entries. As such, Skarbo fails to describe or suggest representing an individual with a specific identifier that may be selected by the member to enable communications to be sent by the member to the individual using multiple different communication modalities, let alone representing a group of contacts with a specific identifier that may be selected by the member to enable communications to be sent by the member to the group of contacts using multiple different communication modalities, as recited in independent claim 1.

Furthermore, due to this deficiency in Skarbo, Skarbo also fails to describe or suggest receiving an indication that a member has specified that a particular communication be sent to the specific identifier by which an individual is represented, and, in response, determining, from among multiple different communication modalities, the particular communication modality that the member has selected to be leveraged in sending the particular communication to the individual and determining, for the individual, an appropriate identifier to use to address communications to be sent to the individual using the particular communication modality selected by the member, let alone receiving an indication that a member has specified that a particular communication be sent to the specific identifier by which a group of contacts is represented, and, in response, determining, from among multiple different communication modalities, the particular communication modality that the member has selected to be leveraged

in sending the particular communication to the group of contacts and determining, for individual contacts within the group of contacts, appropriate identifiers to use to address communications to be sent to the individual contacts using the particular communication modality selected by the member, as recited in independent claim 1. In fact, there is no need for Skarbo's shared address book to perform any of these features of independent claim 1, because the user of Skarbo's shared address book explicitly instructs the shared address book to use a particular address for an individual in order to send a message to the individual using a particular communication application.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2-4, 12, 21-28, 31-33, and 35, which depend from independent claim 1. Independent claims 29 and 30 recite features similar to those discussed above in connection with independent claim 1, and do so in the context of an apparatus (claim 29) and a system (claim 30). Accordingly, for at least the reasons discussed above in connection with independent claim 1, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of independent claims 29 and 30 and dependent claims 36 and 37, which depend from independent claim 29, and dependent claims 38 and 39, which depend from independent claim 30.

Claims 13, 14, 19, and 20

Dependent claims 13, 14, 19, and 20, each of which depends from independent claim 1, have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over various combinations of Bates, Skarbo, U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0003071 (Mathew), and U.S. Patent No. 6,678,719 (Stimmel). However, neither Mathew nor Stimmel cures the deficiencies in Bates and Skarbo noted above. Accordingly, because of their dependencies and at least for the reasons discussed above in connection with independent claim 1, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 13, 14, 19, and 20.

Conclusion

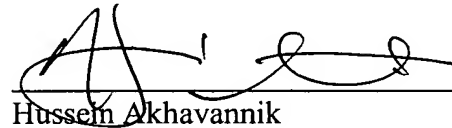
Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

The fee in the amount of \$930 in payment of the Request for Continued Examination Fee (\$810) and in payment of a one-month extension of time fee (\$120) is being paid by way of our deposit account 06-1050. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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